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NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE

JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL

<u>**TAKING THE GUESSWORK OUT OF STRATEGY**</u>

by

Clarence W. Lukes Jr.

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force

TAKING THE GUESSWORK OUT OF STRATEGY

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

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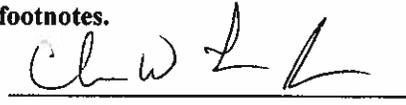
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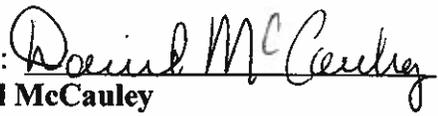
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ABSTRACT

Formulating strategy at the strategic level requires a comprehensive approach that identifies key strategic factors essential to success. History has shown how a lesser disciplined approach becomes overwhelmed and leads to faulty strategy. An appraisal process and more specifically, Dr. Harry Yarger's Strategic Appraisal Process, provides a framework that effectively distills from the strategic environment, the key strategic factors guiding strategy among nation states. The Strategic Appraisal Process is the framework applied against U.S.-African strategic relations to guide the national security professional through its implementation and provides valuable U.S. policy and strategy formulation insights.

The analysis concludes with recommendations affecting the U.S. regional interests in Africa encompassing: China's growing influence in Africa, the valiant effort to prevent piracy along the African coasts, empowering and holding accountable young democracies in Sub-Saharan Africa, developing a shared responsibility of eradicating violent extremism, and the effects of funding HIV/AIDS in Africa.

DEDICATION

To my loving family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Identifying what is important is essential in formulating a successful strategy at either the strategic or the operational level. Moreover, those charged with creating strategy would admit that it is extremely challenging. Take, for example, the various factors affecting formulating theater strategy at the strategic/operational level for U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). Daily, Admiral Winnefeld, USNORTHCOM's commander, accounts for counter-terrorism and transnational criminal threats from Canada, Mexico, and other nations of embarkation to the United States.[1] In addition, he must also ensure maritime and air-control assets deliver timely indications and warnings of threats in the physical battle-space of North America. At the same time, the strategic environment is full of events such as peacekeeping operations in Africa, cyber-attacks on critical American infrastructure, and humanitarian support in Haiti that invariably affect his area of responsibility. In addition, global economic unrest and international law issues are constraints along with sequencing and coordinating tasks with other instruments of national power to keep America safe.

All the factors mentioned above, and many more not listed, demand attention and USNORTHCOM's leadership must account for them during the development of their theater strategy. From the aforementioned example, one can see the complexities associated with creating effective strategy. Admiral Winnefeld cannot afford to get it wrong; the United States' security is at stake. Therefore, the need of identifying what is important is crucial and in the context of the current resource-constrained environment,

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[1] Admiral James A. Winnefeld Jr., Senior Leader Perspective briefing, JFSC, Norfolk, February 11, 2011.

the strategy-to-resource method that combatant commanders use to justify their budgets to Congress, must clearly link to national policy and strategy.

The complex nature of the environment that acts upon the components of strategy complicates formulation. In addition, other factors interrupt the thought processes required to guide strategy to its desired effects successfully. Nonetheless, there is a structured way to overcome many of the difficulties in identifying what is important for successful strategy formulation. The appraisal process is the answer.

Past and present world events provide examples of what happens when resources and efforts do not focus on the essential factors for strategy development; failure to do so leads to either not achieving or significantly delaying the desired effects. Warren Chin's article, "The United Kingdom and the War on Terror," shows how not focusing on what is important leads to faulty strategy formulation. Chin argues that though the United Kingdom's strategy was thoughtful enough to account for the diplomatic, economic, and military elements of national power, the misuse of the military element undermined the other two in the pursuit of the desired strategic effects.[2] Sequencing and coordinating the various elements[3] of national power are inherent actions of an appraisal process. In this case, the United Kingdom failed to identify the appropriate key factors required to inform strategy that would yield the desired strategic effects.

Another example comes from David Ucko's and Thomas Ricks' analysis of the United States' role in the counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ucko and

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[2] Warren Chin, "The United Kingdom and the War on Terror: The Breakdown of National and Military Strategy," *Contemporary Security Policy*, http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy6.ndu.edu/pqdweb (accessed November 6, 2010)

[3] The use of the term Instruments versus Elements of National Power differed among the various authors researched. Though the naming convention differed, the meaning and context were synonymous within this paper.

Ricks admit that eventually the correct strategy was unearthed; however, the arrival at such a realization came after much resistance and angst among military leadership. Ucko points to the paradigm developed through a history of American conventional success as the main obstacle to overcome to realize, finally, what was required to achieve the desired strategic effects against the Taliban.[4] Interrupting paradigms is a fundamental part of an appraisal process.

Thomas Ricks attributes the change in strategy more to the creativity of military leaders like General David Petraeus and not to a product of a comprehensive process that identifies the key factors associated with effective strategy formulation.[5] An important attribute of a valid strategy is its acceptability. In other words, do the "effects sought justify the objectives pursued."[6] In General Petraeus' case, following his strategy sooner may have resulted in less bloodshed and the inability of the previous strategy to account appropriately for an insurgency highlights a deficiency in original strategy formulation. General Petraeus, through expert understanding and leadership, could identify what was important which led to what many believe as the turning point for the counterinsurgency in Iraq. This paper proposes that similar success is obtainable via an appraisal process.

Even though the aforementioned examples show the risks of not focusing on the correct key factors that lead to successful strategy, offsetting evidence exists in the

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[4] David H. Ucko and Mark Phythian, review of "The New Counterinsurgency Era: Transforming the US Military for Modern Wars," by Thomas Ricks, *Perspective on Politics* Vol 8, Iss. 4 (December 2010): 1280-1283 http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy6.ndu.edu/pqdweb (accessed November 6, 2010)

[5] Aaron Karp, review of "The Gamble: General Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq," by Thomas Ricks, *Contemporary Security Policy* Vol. 31, Iss. 2 (August 2010): 374, http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy6.ndu.edu/pqdweb (accessed November 6, 2010)

[6] Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 156.

successful British counterinsurgency strategy in Malaya (1948-60)[7] and the U.S. Marine Corps' Combined Action Program[8] in Vietnam. These historical events are shining examples of the criticality of identifying at the outset the key factors essential to achieving the desired end states and focusing resources to achieve those ends. In both examples, the counterinsurgency strategies used were very successful because they accurately identified what was important and enabled a winning focus to guide performance from the beginning.

As seen in the Iraq and Afghanistan strategy examples, one observes a demonstrated inability to identify from the strategic environment early, what is important. The examples of Malaya and Vietnam show the benefits of identifying those key factors that are the hallmarks of successful strategy formulation and are the natural products of an appraisal process.

These examples serve to illustrate the need for a comprehensive and resilient process that distills out of a very complex strategic environment the key strategic factors indispensable to successful strategies. It is also true that there are other ways to identify what is important to successful strategy formulation, but it is more often equally dependent on the individuals involved such as General Petraeus and less on the process. Such an approach that relies on individuals, however, leads to inconsistent results, and may lack the robust attention that an appraisal process provides. Therefore, the thesis of this paper proposes that using an appraisal process will help national security

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[7] Joel E. Hamby, "Civil-Military Operations: Joint Doctrine and the Malayan Emergency," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 32, (Autumn 2002): 54-61.

[8] Paul Melshen, "The U.S. Marines' Combined Action Program in Vietnam: The Formulation of Counterinsurgency Tactics within a Strategic Debate," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement*, Vol. 9, No.2 (Summer 2000): 63-69.

professionals avoid focusing on irrelevant or false strategy drivers and assist in the identification of the key factors essential to successful strategy formulation. This paper will equip the national security professional or strategist with a real-world illustration of how implementing an appraisal process leads to informing successful strategy formulation.

Chapter 1 provides a definition of strategy and an explanation of its principles relevant to an appraisal process. This chapter also unveils Africa as the strategic reference for analysis and highlights the United States' interests, policies, and the instruments of national power germane to Africa. Chapter 2 starts with historical references emphasizing the relevance of strategy. It introduces the chosen appraisal process as a method that can counteract the difficulty of making sense of the vast amounts of information affecting strategy and applies said process in detail to set the strategist on a course to success. The conclusion reiterates the point that an appraisal process delivers what the strategist needs via an objective and comprehensive approach. It carries the message of the need for an appraisal process versus a non-structured approach that has characteristics of an ad-hoc process. Such ad-hoc processes lack the ability to create constructive tensions that are the result of forcing the strategist to analyze the strategic environment from different perspectives and paradigms. Finally, it captures recommendations for considerations for those formulating strategy to solve shared challenges between the United States and Africa.

Chapter 1

Background

The benefits of using an appraisal process are clear and Colonel Fred Sadrak and Dr. Harry Yarger[1] provide two appraisal options that enable the strategist to identify what is necessary for strategy formulation. Colonel Sadrak created an appraisal process called, "Regional Strategic Appraisal," which is widely used at the U.S. Army War College to "analyze a specific region in order to identify U.S. regional interests, identify policies that support the interests, and develop strategies to obtain or further the interests."[2] Dr. Yarger provides a more robust appraisal process that he calls, "The Strategic Appraisal." The purpose of his strategic appraisal is to "quantify and qualify what is known, believed to be known and unknown about the strategic environment in regard to a particular realm of strategy and identify what is important in regard to such strategy's formulation."[3]

Though either appraisal approach would lead to formulating sound strategy, Yarger's version is far more robust and provides an exhaustive means of identifying what is indeed important. The Strategic Appraisal is a component of the Theory of Strategy framework[4] and sets the foundation for strategy development. As a result, it will be the working framework for this paper.

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[1] Dr. Harry R. Yarger is a retired Army Colonel who is the Professor of National Security Policy in the Department of National Security and Strategy at the U.S. Army War College

[2] Colonel Fred Sadrak, *Aid to Formulating a Regional Strategic Appraisal* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2001), Introduction.

[3] Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 51.

[4] Yarger's framework consists of a strategic paradigm that clearly delineates policy, strategy, planning and strategic thinking. It offers an exhaustive analysis of the strategic environment that feeds the Strategic Appraisal Process that leads to strategy formulation.

Theory of Strategy Principles

Strategy is defined as the "method of creating strategic effects favorable to policy and interests by applying ends, ways, and means in the strategic environment."[5] This definition becomes even clearer once the reader gains a better understanding of the premises of strategy. The following principles come from the Theory of Strategy framework and provide an in-depth appreciation of the influence of strategy on the strategic appraisal process.

"Strategy is proactive and anticipatory but not predictive."[6] Strategy does not dictate the future, but it does attempt to anticipate it and seeks to shape it in favorable terms. Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) fills the strategic environment. The strategist's goal is to exercise influence over the VUCA in the strategic environment and to direct the actions necessary to achieve the desired effects.

One of the main reasons for using the strategic appraisal process is to enable the strategist to take a proactive role in strategy formulation. A reactive strategy is the byproduct of not analyzing the strategic environment in a comprehensive manner. The strategic appraisal process is an iterative framework, and forces its implementer to digest the strategic environment in ways that keep him or her focused on what is important.

"Strategy is subordinate to policy."[7] National policy articulates the intangible nature of national interests into a tangible foundation from which guidance flows. That guidance is the source from which strategy grows. Without policy, strategy would be absent of the nation's binding guidance that defines the objectives, end states, and

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[5] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 150.

[6] Ibid., 151.

[7] Ibid., 151.

parameters for operation. The strategic appraisal process helps translate policy into strategy. Policy, especially at the strategic level, comes from various national leadership sources. These sources may be contradictory but the strategic appraisal process can help successfully reconcile the various inputs with the use of structural analysis models that force the filtering of policy into coherent and consistent messaging. As a result, one can carry through to strategy formulation, a more complete understanding of policy intentions.

"Strategy is contextual and subordinate to the nature of the environment."[8] The strategic appraisal process strikes at the heart of this principle. Context and environment are the key inputs that the strategist must account for prior and during strategy formulation, and to ignore either will certainly result in flawed strategy. In addition, the advantage of the strategic appraisal process over an ad-hoc process of strategy formulation is a holistic approach vice a partial examination of the strategic environment. The comprehensive nature of the strategic appraisal accommodates strategic thinking competencies that help maintain the proper relationship between strategy and the strategic environment. Ad-hoc processes are normally the invention of an individual who may not have a mechanism available to gain insights outside of one's paradigm, which can easily lead to an incorrect connection between strategy and the strategic environment.

"Strategy maintains a holistic perspective."[9] National strategy development depends on national policy that spans all instruments of national power or a whole of government approach. Strategy suggests these broad approaches are often interdependent and require coordination and integration throughout formulation. In addition, the

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[8] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 151.

[9] Ibid., 151.

domestic and international environments that influence strategy represent a continual force that shapes formulation. The strategic appraisal process employs strategic thinking competencies that insist on the integrated application of the various perspectives and actions of the relevant stakeholders affecting strategy development. These competencies on their own are valuable and the strategic appraisal process implements their use at a time that creates synergistic effects.

"Strategy is founded in what needs to be accomplished and why it is to be accomplished."[10] This principle is the main purpose of the strategic appraisal process. If one does not base strategy on what is indeed important, it is virtually impossible to create effective strategy by design. Assuming sound policy, fundamentally strategy highlights what one needs to do and why.

"Strategy focuses on root purposes and causes."[11] Good strategy is enduring because it focuses on what is important. Once again, the strategic appraisal process will assist the strategist in this endeavor, and will provide a better outcome than that if left to chance or inaction. The environment in which one formulates strategy is not inherently stable. In fact, one could say it displays characteristics of a chaotic system of systems. The main reason the strategic appraisal process can focus on root purposes and causes is through its disciplined framework that guides the strategist through the vast amounts of information found in the strategic environment and extracts the key factors that lead to successful strategy.

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[10] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 152.

[11] Ibid., 152.

"Strategy provides a proper relationship or balance among the objectives sought, the methods to pursue the objectives, and the resources available."[12] This principle is fundamental and permeates every process during strategy formulation. "Inherent to all strategy are the functions of suitability, feasibility, and acceptability."[13] These three functions factor into the formulation process by ensuring the formulated strategy has proper balance.[14] The strategic appraisal process displays its realist identity at the intersection of these three factors. At the intersection of these three factors is where the strategic appraisal process displays its realist identity. Regardless of the idealistic nature of the policy driving strategy, the product must be tolerable to those responsible for implementing it. It provides a means to quantify the dialogue of efficiency and effectiveness.

"Risk is inherent to all strategy."[15] No matter how well the strategic appraisal identifies what is important, the VUCA and the intended audience of the strategy have influence on its ultimate effectiveness. One can never eliminate risk, so national security professionals need to remain proactive and anticipate the adverse effects of it and the strategic appraisal process accommodates risk throughout every step.

In summary, the Strategic Appraisal is an extension of the Theory of Strategy framework. One's understanding of the nature of strategy and the framework that underpins its foundation is critical in the application of an appraisal process and the

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[12] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 152.

[13] Ibid., 156.

[14] Dr. Yarger defines the three terms in the following manner: Suitability addresses whether the attainment of the objectives using the instruments of power in the manner stated accomplish the strategic effects desired. Feasibility addresses whether once can execute the strategic concept with the resources available, and acceptability addresses whether the strategic effects sought justify the objectives pursued, the methods used to achieve them, and the cost.

[15] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 152.

subsequent development of strategy. The Strategic Appraisal will extract from the

strategic environment the stimulus for the strategy. It will determine and articulate

interests and capture the intensity between the national core and regional interests, which

will ultimately lead to unveiling key strategic factors (what is indeed important) that

drive sound strategy formulation. As a result, the strategist will successfully navigate the

maze of potential pitfalls that have preceded the demise of many well-intentioned plans

destined for failure because their originators based them on faulty strategy that failed to

leverage the power of a strategic appraisal.

As alluded to in both Sadrak's and Yarger's appraisal processes, strategy

formulation needs a strategic environment to derive context and purpose. For the

purposes of this paper, U.S.-African relations will provide such an environment but

serves for more than a mere academic vehicle.

Africa Overview

Africa's global relevance continues to increase and issues like natural resource

exploitation, violent extremist activities, and ongoing humanitarian crisis have a

significant effect on core national interests.[16] Because of these various issues, Africa is a

prototypical environment for the development of a coherent U.S.-African strategy. As

such, Africa will serve as a practical example for use in this paper and provide a data

point that can influence the current or future formulation of national and regional strategy

between the United States and Africa.

Africa is an enormous and diverse continent. Africa is the second largest

continent in the world, and is the home of people who collectively speak thousands of

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[16] Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interest and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa, April 2010* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), ii.

languages. Africa has breathtaking geography, a rich history, and often considered the birthplace of human civilization. Past European colonization influences modern-day Africa, and has a significant impact on understanding the complex environment that describes African strategy formulation. Like Europe and Asia, Africa is certainly not monolithic but references of Africa not focused on a specific country will be in reference to the Sub-Saharan region. Strategists widely consider North Africa part of the Arab world, and except for the oil and trade aspects, will have limited references in this paper.

Because of the diversity of Africa, one would expect a strategic approach equally diverse. Though most of Africa share the same strategic challenges and opportunities, exceptions like South Africa and Nigeria can have a ripple effect on strategy continent-wide. Individual countries and in certain cases, regions of influence will anchor the strategic environment that will spotlight subsequent U.S. strategy considerations.

National Interests in Africa

Historically, Africa provided very little in the way of American national interest. In fact, according to one defense analyst, "during the Cold War, United States foreign policy toward Sub-Saharan Africa had little to do with Africa."[17] Moreover, in the mid-1990s, the Department of Defense stated in its U.S. Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa that, "ultimately we see very little traditional strategic interest in Africa."[18]

By the late 1990s however, terrorist attacks on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania brought a renewed focus to the forefront. From that point forward, Africa

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[17] Letitia Lawson, "U.S. Africa Policy Since the Cold War," Navy Postgraduate School, http://www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/OnlineJournal/2007/Jan/lawsonJan07.pdf (accessed November 6, 2010)

[18] Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs. "U.S. Defense Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa," *Defense.gov.* August 1, 1995. http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=943 (accessed November 6, 2010).

provided the backdrop to the United States' response to terrorist activities that threatened both American and African interests.

National interests form the foundation of strategy development. Figure 1.1 illustrates the hierarchal relationship among national interest, policy, and strategy. The figure also echoes the complexity of the strategic environment as chance and adversarial demands oppose the desired strategic effects of strategy.

Figure 1.1 Strategic Environment

Source: Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 50.

As stated in the 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy, the core national interests for security, prosperity, values, and international order are essential in achieving the world the United States seek.[19] Derived from these core national interests, the United States has focused its regional strategic interests with Africa in the following areas: oil and global trade, maritime security, armed conflict, violent extremism, and HIV/AIDS.[20]

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[19] U.S. President, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, DC: May 2010), 17.

[20] Ploch, *U.S. Military in Africa,* 15.

The linkage between the United States' core national interests and those that define the U.S.-African regional strategic interests is clear and the next chapter will further explore these interests during the appraisal process. However, the remainder of this section will articulate the importance of the analysis centered on the emerging strategic relevance of Africa.

United States oil trade with Africa has more than tripled in the last 20 years and as of 2010, Africa supplies roughly the same amount of crude oil as does the Middle East.[21] Maritime security is tenuous, particularly along the Gulf of Guinea, the Gulf of Aden, and the West Indian Ocean as African governments struggle to prevent criminal elements from smuggling people, drugs, and weapons through its waters.[22] Armed conflicts have led to "human suffering on a massive scale and as a result undermined economic, social, and political development."[23] This instability placed a significant drain on the international community's humanitarian and defense resources.

Violent extremism has sanctuary in Africa. From terrorist attacks on American embassies, to failed states providing safe havens for terrorist activities, the impact of violent extremism creates a lasting effect. Last, HIV/AIDS represents a medical catastrophe of epic proportions. Started by the Bush Administration and sustained by President Obama as part of his Global Health Initiative, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has committed over $48 billion with 12 of the 15 focus countries located in Africa.[24]

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[21] Ploch, *U.S. Military in Africa*, 15.

[22] Ibid., 16.

[23] Ibid., 17.

[24] Ibid., 19.

Oil and global trade, maritime security, armed conflict, violent extremism, and HIV/AIDS comprise the regional strategic interests with Africa. One can certainly see why these areas frame the current strategic dialogue. These interests clearly map back to the core national interests and ultimately provide the foundation for strategy formulation.

Instruments of National Power Relevant to Africa

The use of the various instruments of national power anchors the current American engagement strategy with Africa. Specifically, a common theme from the current U.S. National Security Strategy focuses on diplomacy, development, and defense. The three major stakeholders who embody those functions are the U.S. Department of State (DoS), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM).

The mission of the DoS is to "Advance freedom for the benefit of the American people and the international community by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty, and act responsibly within the international system."[25] From this foundation, entities such as the Bureau of African Affairs, the division of the Department of State that advises the Secretary of State about Sub-Saharan Africa, along with Chief of Missions' guidance, round out the Department of State's main contributors who shape the diplomatic and economic landscape between the United States and Africa.

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[25] Hillary R. Clinton, "Agency Financial Report Fiscal Year 2009," *State.gov.* December 2009. http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/132214.pdf (accessed November 17, 2010)

The mission of USAID is to "promote peace and stability by fostering economic growth, protecting human health, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, and nurturing democracy in developing countries."[26] Just as the goal in Afghanistan has been for the men and women of that country to take the lead in shaping a brighter future, so is the goal for Africa. However, diplomacy and defense cannot reach this goal alone. Development is the engine that will sustain the progress of Africa, and as a result will assist in securing the shared interests between the United States and Africa.

Former President Bush created U.S. Africa Command, the newest combatant command, with a strong sense of the need to have interagency representation built into the command structure from day one. Activated in 2007, the command continues to strive to be the leader in DoD's security role in Africa and provides an environment of security vital to the success of other instruments of national power on the African continent. As approved by the Secretary of Defense in May 2008, the mission of USAFRICOM is as follows: "United States Africa Command, in concert with other U.S. government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy."[27]

In summary, U.S.-African relations provide an excellent context to demonstrate the importance of an appraisal process. The choice to use Dr. Yarger's Strategic Appraisal method because of its comprehensive framework will surely help the strategist

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[26] USAID, "Primer: What We Do and How We Do It," January 2006, http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/primer.html (accessed November 7, 2010).

[27] U.S. AFRICOM Home Page, http://www.africom.mil/AboutAFRICOM.asp (accessed November 11, 2010).

discover what is indeed important for strategy formulation. Part of Yarger's method appeal is its informative extension of his Theory of Strategy framework that provides a fundamental understanding of strategy that articulates the relationship among the national interests in Africa, core American interests, and the employment of instruments of national power.

Chapter 2

Analysis Overview

The great military theorist, Carl Von Clausewitz defined strategy in terms of ends and means with the original means of strategy defined as "tactical success and the ends defined as peace."[1] That understanding of strategy has endured the test of time, and is virtually a signpost guiding today's national security professionals. Though the words "means" and "ends" have taken on modern connotations, the fundamental importance of strategy remains the bedrock of success as nation states interact with their environments. Another timeless military theorist, Sun Tzu, places great importance on strategy as well. Sun Tzu writes, "What is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy."[2] He places strategy ahead of fielded forces and alliances as the focus of one's military capabilities.

A modern explanation of strategy that accounts for today's complex global environment is as follows, "Strategy is best understood as the art and science of developing and using the political, economic, socio-psychological, and military powers of the state in accordance with policy guidance to create effects that protect or advance the state's interests in the strategic environment."[3]

National strategy provides the proper focus for improving U.S.-African relations. Whether one arrives at peace through conflict as a last resort as Clausewitz maintains or

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[1] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*. ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 165.

[2] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*. trans. Samuel Griffith. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 77.

[3] Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 115.

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expertly wields all elements of national power to obtain the desired effects, developing the correct strategy remains at the heart of both and its importance is irreplaceable.

Strategic Appraisal Process Introduction

When a policy or strategy fails, it is likely that one can trace the cause back to the failure of those charged with creating it to determine what is essential to achieving its goals. If one uses a flawed foundation for supporting the strategy, there is little likelihood of gaining the desired effects. The ability to identify and focus on what is indeed valuable is the foundation of a successful strategy. To commit the strategist's energies to creating sound strategy that brings about the desired effects, the strategic appraisal process delivers the proper identification of interests and their levels of intensity and the selection of the key strategic factors.

The process in Figure 2.1 refers to a strategist's Weltanschauung. Weltanschauung translated from German means "world view." This perspective shows how the strategic appraisal can quantify and qualify the knowns and unknowns of the environment and determine what is important concerning the nation's strategy formulation.[4] The figure is an illustration of the Strategic Appraisal process, and encapsulates the steps that filter the strategist's "world view" through a series of steps that distills what is indeed important to develop strategy. However, before moving to the first step in the process, note the ensuing analysis is the product of an individual. Ideally, one would want more than one person involved in the appraisal process. Multiple implementers provide a more complete understanding of the strategic environment from

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[4] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 116.

their application of the structural models and thinking competencies. Nonetheless, the

insights gained from this paper are proof of the value of the strategic appraisal process.

Stimulus or Requirement

The first step of the strategic appraisal process highlights the importance of

identifying and understanding the stimulus or requirement. This step provides the

"strategist's motivation, but it will ultimately lend legitimacy, authority, and impetus to

the appraisal and strategy formulation processes and the subsequent implementation of

the strategy."[5] In this step, one answers the "why question" in strategy and for this

paper, each answer to the "why question" has its origin in the United States' core national

interests.

Figure 2.1 Strategic Appraisal Process

Source: Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security
International, 2008), 116.

Security concerns continue to be the focus of the American strategic efforts in

Africa. The vast ungoverned spaces within the continent are a key enabler to direct

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[5] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 117.

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threats from terrorism against the United States. American national leadership has no greater responsibility than the safety of its constituents. A proper strategy to engage Africa on the security front is paramount to keeping America safe.

Prosperity is another driver for strategy with Africa. Globalization and the current financial crisis throughout the world magnify the importance of sound economic partnerships. Import and export transactions as well as the United States' dependence on fossil fuels, place Africa in the conversation of economic interdependence. In addition, China and others are looking to Africa to meet their natural resource demand. The United States cannot afford to sit idly by and miss an opportunity to engage Africa on this front.

Last, international order is yet another key driver to why strategy is important. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa extends beyond its borders - not in terms of spreading the disease but in terms of defining the solution. This is clearly more than an African problem and the United States is one of a few nations with the resources and the will to give this issue the attention it requires.

As mentioned earlier, American interest in Africa is on the rise, and to be successful, recent history points to a requirement for a thoughtful and comprehensive strategy with Africa. Through this rigor, one can safeguard the core national interests with respect to Africa.

Determine and Articulate Interests

The second step is to determine and articulate interests. To scope the national interests in this paper, a regional perspective guides the use of instruments of national power. Looking at national interest from the regional level identifies the following five

interests derived from the U.S. National Security Strategy: oil and global trade, maritime

security, armed conflict, violent extremism, and HIV/AIDS.

The following quote from Secretary Clinton during a conference on Sub-Saharan

Africa illustrates the essence of the United States' national interests toward Africa:

> We believe that the future of Africa is in the hands of Africans. And we
> have to join hands to work together to develop that partnership to expand
> democracy that delivers good governance, promoting sustainable
> economic growth, improving access to healthcare, education, basic
> services, and working to eliminate the conflicts that destroy lives and
> destabilize the region.[6]

Verbal and written national guidance define national interests. The President,

U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense, and U.S. Agency for

International Development champion and share these inputs. As seen in the statement

from the Secretary, the expression of interests may communicate tangible or non-tangible

effects. Though Secretary Clinton's quote, like other national leader dialogue, is not a

verbatim account of the national interest proposed by this paper, there is an obvious

semblance, which draws from the five core interests introduced in the U.S. National

Security Strategy. After determining the interests, one has the basis for determining the

intensity of those interests.

Determine Intensity of Interests

The third step in the strategic appraisal process is to determine the interests' level

of intensity. The reason for this step is to indicate criticality and priority. Survival, vital,

important, and peripheral comprises the intensity levels seen in Figure 2.2.

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[6] Hillary R. Clinton, Diplomacy Briefing Series: Conference on Sub-Saharan Africa, June 14, 2010, (accessed November 17, 2010).

The levels of intensity deals mainly with the relative importance of each interest but also "have temporal, resource, and risk acceptance implications."[7] However, the designation of intensity does not direct the decision to act nor how to act. That decision function flows from the strategy formulation process.

Figure 2.2 Measure of Levels of Intensity

Survival	If unfulfilled, will result in immediate massive destruction of one or more major aspects of the core national interests
Vital	If unfulfilled, will have immediate consequence for core national interests
Important	If unfulfilled, will result in damage that will eventually affect core national interests
Peripheral	If unfulfilled, will result in damage that is unlikely to affect core national interests

Source: National Security Policy and Strategy Academic Year 2007, 106-108, quoted in Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), 118.

To address intensity, one has to have knowledge of the core national interests. The core national interests as stated in the U.S. National Security Strategy are,[8]

- Security: The security of the United States, its citizens, and United States allies and partners

- Prosperity: A strong, innovative, and growing United States economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity

- Values: Respect for universal values at home and around the world

- International Order: An international order advanced by United States leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges

The following paragraphs associate and assign a level of intensity between the core national and regional interests in the context of U.S.-African relations. The methodology used will measure the intensity between the core and regional interests via

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[7] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 122.

[8] *National Security Strategy*, 17.

the most dangerous scenarios using the levels of intensity definitions in Figure 2.2.

Though it is possible to have more than one core interest supported by any given regional

interest, the focus is only on the first-order relationship.

<div align="center">Oil and Global Trade</div>

The regional oil and global trade interest links to the core economic growth and

prosperity interest. The United States' crude oil imports in August 2010 totaled

8,849,000 barrels per day as seen in Table 2.1. African countries combined totaled

1,788,000 barrels per day.

Table 2.1 U.S. Crude Oil Imports

Crude Oil Imports (Thousand Barrels per Day)					
Country	Aug-10	Jul-10	YTD 2010	Aug-09	YTD 2009
CANADA	1,933	2,055	1,981	2,002	1,924
MEXICO	1,158	1,174	1,119	1,057	1,119
SAUDI ARABIA	1,080	1,033	1,071	707	1,010
VENEZUELA	974	1,016	929	1,007	995
NIGERIA	942	1,143	1,010	877	700
ANGOLA	472	374	410	352	484
ALGERIA	374	353	329	404	257
COLOMBIA	346	381	331	260	256
RUSSIA	334	367	296	221	263
IRAQ	281	430	467	500	460
KUWAIT	251	189	208	148	171
BRAZIL	249	315	280	269	334
ECUADOR	236	200	191	131	202
UNITED KINGDOM	121	200	146	72	110

Source: Data from U.S. Energy Information Administration web page,
http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/company_level_imports/current/import.ht
ml (accessed November 17, 2010).

As a collective, African countries represent the second largest exporter of crude oil to the United States accounting for 20% of the volume in August. So what would be the impact of the absence of African oil exports to the United States? Insights from 1973 may provide a baseline for comparison.

One of the most significant oil related events involving the United States and Africa dealt with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo of 1973. Algeria and Nigeria are two of the three current African oil exporters to the United States with OPEC membership. Angola is the third and has no formal ties to OPEC. Because of the embargo, Americans saw an increase in the price of a gallon of gas go from $.30 to $1.20.[9] According to Gerard Minack, an economist with Morgan Stanley, an estimate in 2011 dollars would suggest "for every $1 increase in the price of a gallon of gasoline, U.S. consumer spending falls about $120 billion."[10] Assuming by the same stroke of OPEC solidarity seen during the 1973 embargo, the impact would signify that 44% of American oil imports would increase the price of gasoline by basic economic rules of supply and demand. During the oil embargo of 1973, the Nixon Administration advocated domestic energy conservation measures to cope with the challenging economic situation.[11] No indications from the current strategic environment points to an OPEC that African influence alone will dictate action for the whole. Therefore, if for some reason

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[9] Brian Trumbore, "The Arab Oil Embargo of 1973-74," Buy and Hold website, http://www.buyandhold.com/bh/en/education/history/2002/arab.html, (accessed on 29 November 2010)

[10] Pablo Gorondi, "Crude Oil Jumps 6% as Libya Protests Spread," *USA Today News*, http://www.usatoday.com/article/news/world/43978274?feedID=194&preferredArticleViewMode=single, (accessed on 21 February 2011)

[11] Paul Boyer, *The Oxford Companion to United States History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 225.

only African countries blocked exporting oil to the United States, the impact would be at best 20% as previously noted.

In addition, the United States is the second largest exporter to Sub-Saharan Africa accounting for $18 billion in exported goods and $86.1 billion in imported goods.[12] These figures account for 1.6% and 4.1% of total American global exports and imports respectively.[13] American investment also represents a very small percentage of global total investment in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2008, Sub-Saharan Africa was the beneficiary of $36.6 billion investment dollars from the United States.[14]

The worst-case scenario proposes the termination of oil imports from Africa and American imports and exports with Africa, and the results signify an intensity rating of important for the regional oil and global trade interest. Though the effects of a reduced supply of oil will assuredly raise the price of gasoline if left unchecked, the impact coupled with the lost revenues from American exports to Africa would not have an immediate consequence for core national interests that would have warranted a vital intensity rating.

<p style="text-align:center">Maritime Security</p>

The second regional interest for attention is maritime security. Maritime security links most to the national core interest for economic growth and prosperity due to the economic impact of piracy overshadowing the security aspect. "In 2009, pirate attacks

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[12] Vivian C. Jones, *U.S. Trade and Investment Relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa: The African Growth and Opportunity Act, July 2009* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 6.

[13] Ibid., 10.

[14] Ibid., 10.

continued to escalate in frequency and expanded their geographic range in the western

Indian Ocean out to 1,000 nautical miles from the African coast."[15]

Several highly publicized incidents off the Horn of Africa and Gulf of Aden have

drawn increased international attention and required outside support to address the

situation. The following is an account from the Maritime Administration in February

2009:

> On average, at least one U.S. commercial vessel transits the area each day.
> Many of these US-flag vessels carry Department of Defense cargo bound
> for Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. U.S.-flag vessels transiting
> the region also carry humanitarian cargoes generated by U.S. AID or
> international organizations to the Horn of Africa, including Djibouti,
> Somalia and other countries in East Africa or South Asia.[16]

Somali piracy increases economic costs several ways, "including ransom

payments, damage to ships and cargoes, delays in delivering cargoes, increased maritime

insurance rates, the costs of steps to harden merchant ships against attack, and costs for

using naval forces for anti-piracy operations."[17] The piracy issue is not isolated to the

eastern coast of Africa. Estimates of the Gulf of Guinea pirate threats on the western

coast of Africa costs the global market 55 million barrels of oil worth over $1 billion

annually to "oil bunkering."[18] This is significant because "West African oil supplies are

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[15] General William Ward, 2010 AFRICOM Posture Statement, (March 2010), 8.

[16] U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, Statement of Acting Deputy
Administrator James Caponti before the Sub-committee on Coast Guard and Maritime transportation of the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, United States House of Representatives, on International
Piracy, February 4, 2009, p. 3.

[17] Lauren Ploch et al., *Piracy off the Horn of Africa*, *September 2009* (Washington, DC:
Government Printing Office, 2009), 12.

[18] Andre Le Sage, "Nonstate Security Threats in Africa: Challenge for U.S. Engagement," *Prism*
Vol 2, no. 1 (December 2010): 63.

expected to make up to 25% [up from 20% in 2010] of U.S. foreign oil imports by 2015."[19]

Despite the cumulative effects of piracy, the economic cost is minimal in the strategic context of global shipping commerce and American economic growth. Therefore, when attributing the intensity between the core national interest of economic growth and prosperity and the regional interest for maritime security, the intensity level warrants an important intensity designation. As a result, American decision makers can draw insights from this finding to apply resources in-line with an important level of priority. To apply resources in any other manner would advocate a deliberate criticality imbalance of maritime security in Africa.

Armed Conflict

The third regional interest for attention is armed conflict. This regional interest has the greatest impact on the core national interest for international order. This connection exists due to the vital relationship between the stability goals found in the U.S. National Security Strategy and the numerous armed conflicts erupting across Africa.

A very effective instrument to champion international order is through an organization that upholds international norms like freedom, justice, and security. The United Nations (UN) is a global organization recognized for its ability to take action to correct injustices. Currently, there are seven ongoing UN operations in Africa. Short of listing and addressing them all, the situation in the Darfur region in Sudan adequately provides a representative sample to measure the criticality between the core and regional interests for this discussion. The ongoing conflict between the Arab-led Sudanese

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[19] United States National Intelligence Council, "External Relations and Africa," Discussion Paper, March 16, 2004.

government in the north and the Darfuris in the south is home to a horrific domestic confrontation. Hundreds of thousands of Darfuris are dead and many more displaced from their homes. Despite African Union and international pressure, the conditions persist and there is very little hope for a peaceful solution.

Curbing other armed conflicts in Africa is finding similar results. Current American policy supports the UN's and other organizations' lead in resolving these matters. The United States' choice of placing an African or international "face" on conflict resolution is understandable based on the negative perceptions of colonial influences in Africa. Nonetheless, the armed conflicts happening in Africa pose a threat to American interests for achieving an international order that promotes peace and security.

The measurement of the intensity between the core national interest for international order and the regional interest for armed conflict results in an intensity level of important criticality. Although the effects of the armed conflicts are heart wrenching, their effect on the core interest does not carry an immediate consequence to the United States.

<center>Violent Extremism</center>

The fourth regional interest to consider is violent extremism. This regional interest has the greatest impact on the core national interest for security. The events that transpired on September 11, 2001 have forever changed America's focus on homeland security. Al Qaeda remains the major source of this threat in Africa. The former Director of Intelligence, "Dennis Blair, has repeatedly expressed concern over Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the increasing capabilities of terrorist groups in East

<center>29</center>

Africa."[20] This concern is a clear and present threat due to the amount of ungoverned

space throughout Africa. Countries like Somalia have shown an inability to secure their

population and enforce the rule of law, which has provided safe-havens for terrorist

groups. In 2004, a DOD official stated, "Africa has been, is now, and will be into the

foreseeable future ripe for terrorists and acts of terrorism."[21] His words certainly hold

true today and serve as a daily reminder to the Obama Administration of the ever-present

terrorist threat that exists in Africa. Even though the individual responsible for the failed

terrorist attack on Times Square in May 2010 may have received his training in Pakistan,

he could have attended a terrorist camp in Africa. The regional conflicts that have placed

several countries in Africa on the cusp of a failed state are only adding to an already

difficult situation that has a significant effect on American national security.

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 are still fresh in the minds of

American leadership. The United States has identified certain parts of Africa as an

enabler to violent extremism. The inability of the African collective to address the

terrorist threat places great pressure on U.S. Homeland Security and Intelligence

capabilities. The looming possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the

hands of terrorists, places a level of intensity between core and regional interest at the

survival criticality. The worst-case scenario, even if the weapons do not originate in

Africa, delivers a plausible scenario that could easily include Africa into the terror chain.

Moreover, the following quote from President Obama drives the point home. "There is no

greater threat to the American people than weapons of mass destruction, particularly the

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[20] Ploch, *U.S. Military in Africa*, 17.

[21] Speech by DOD official Vincent Kern referenced in "Africa Is Still Ripe for Terrorism, Top Pentagon Official Asserts," The Washington File, February 10, 2004.

danger posed by the pursuit of nuclear weapons by violent extremists and their proliferation to additional states."[22]

It is difficult to imagine a more terrible attack than that of September 11, 2001, but some have argued the occurrence to be one not of possibility but of probability. Immediate massive destruction of one or more major aspects of the core national interests for security, economic growth and prosperity, and international order would result if a non-state actor attacked the United States using nuclear weapons which constitutes an intensity level of survival.

HIV/AIDS

The fifth and final regional interest to consider is HIV/AIDS. The U.S. National Security Strategy under the values core interest creates the link to this regional interest via the pursuit of a comprehensive global health strategy.[23] HIV/AIDS has taken a considerable toll on Africa and has commanded the attention of the world. "There are currently just over 33 million people infected with HIV, more than 22 million of whom are in Sub-Saharan Africa."[24] The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the United States' single largest continuing commitment to Africa, originally disbursed some $15 billion over its first five years, but spent $25 billion between 2003 and 2008.[25]

Of the three parts that comprise the core national interest for values, global health strategy is the lowest in priority. With more significant focus areas like strengthen the

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[22] *National Security Strategy*, 4.

[23] Ibid., 39.

[24] Princeton N. Lyman, "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 89, Iss. 4 (Aug 2010): 74.

[25] Ibid., 74.

power of the American example and promoting democracy and human rights abroad, HIV/AIDS registers a low-level of criticality. It is justifiable to conclude that if the regional interest for HIV/AIDS becomes ineffective, it would warrant a peripheral level of intensity rating.

In summary, the intensity levels for the United States' regional interest as seen in Figure 2.3 for Africa are oil and global trade (**Important**), maritime security (**Important**), armed conflict (**Important**), violent extremism (**Survival**) and HIV/AIDS (**Peripheral**). Once again, these intensities indicate a level of criticality and priority. This section provided a logical approach that captured the relationship between the U.S. core and regional interests in the context of the strategic environment. The next step will involve assessing the information relative to the interests.

Figure 2.3 Summary of Regional Interests Intensity Levels
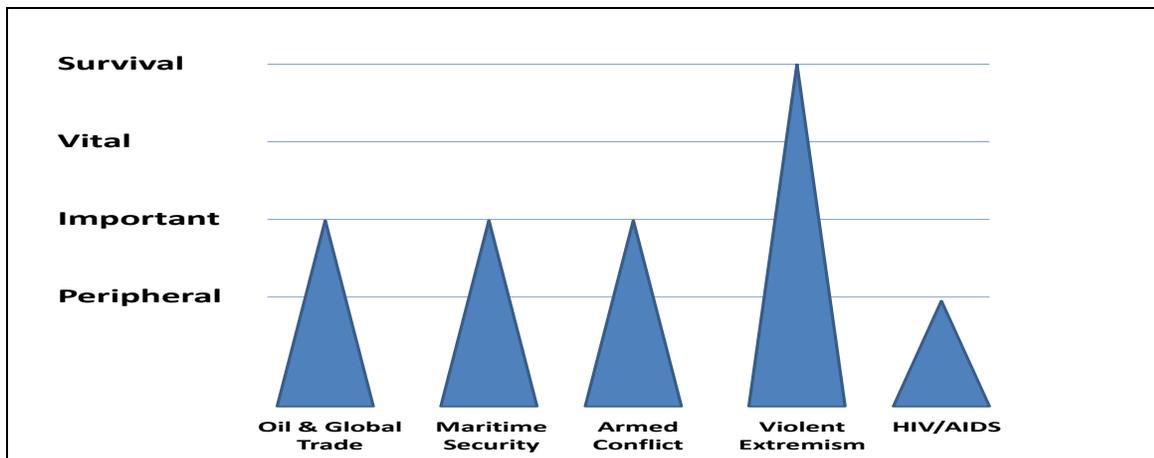
Assess Information

Assessing the information is an open-ended step. This step attempts to "uncover and consider all information from friendly, neutral, and adversarial perspectives, and

from objective and subjective perspectives in each case."[26] This analysis will ultimately lead to the identification of key factors from which one develops strategy.

Assumptions

The unrestricted nature of assessing the information requires the use of assumptions to help bridge the informational gaps between what is known and unknown concerning policy affects on the strategic environment and the use of instruments of national power. An assumption is a statement that helps frame the environment, problem, and potential solutions. This paper does not intend to use assumptions as an enabler to planning. Though these assumptions may flow naturally to support subordinate plans in the context of U.S.-African relations, the focus of assumptions here is to add a depth of understanding of the various interests where facts are either unclear or nonexistent but required to support analysis.

The three assumptions below deal with the strategic environment and obtain its origin from the core national interest for values and international order, and literally cuts across each of the five regional interests in Africa. The United States must overcome substantial negative historical inertia to have the desired impact of positive, enduring relations with Africa.

The Obama administration has placed a new focus on reshaping America's greatness. The president states, "Our approach begins with a commitment to build a stronger foundation for American leadership, because what takes place within our borders will determine our strength and influence beyond them."[27] In other words, the example of the United States will affect the credibility and sincerity of its foreign relations.

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[26] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 123.

[27] *National Security Strategy*, 2.

Therefore, a key assumption here is building a strong foundation of leadership and example within the United States will translate into successful U.S.-African relations.

Another key assumption centers on comprehensive engagement. In addition to improving engagement with its closest allies, the United States has placed a high priority on strengthening ties with emerging regions of influence like Africa.[28] Unfortunately, for Africa, historical engagements manifested themselves through colonial exploitation. Despite the economic, diplomatic, and health issues that plague the African continent, the United States' comprehensive engagement strategy will resonate with Africans and prove to be a genuine and acceptable partnership.

Last, one can conclude that ever since the Second World War, the United States represents the prominent global superpower. With this distinction comes an explicit but sometimes assumed responsibility to ensure international order when situations call for a response that no other nation can satisfy. Despite this obligation, the United States has limited resources and prioritizes where and to what extent it will involve itself in as part of a global solution. The United States certainly is a stakeholder in the budding democracies in Africa. Once again, history has shown an unhealthy level of regression in many of the democratic governments in Africa due to corruption and an inability to secure its populations. Therefore, an important assumption here is the current level of United States commitment to a just and sustainable international order will have the desired effects, which will overturn a history of struggling and fading democracies in Africa.

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[28] *National Security Strategy*, 11.

The following assumptions focus on the instruments of national power. The three major instruments of national power highlighted in this paper: diplomacy, development, and defense; all have subordinate national strategies whether stated or implied that link to the U.S. National Security Strategy. With each link comes a host of respective assumptions that represents to a degree the rigidity in each. Moreover, the assumptions of higher level strategy become the facts of subordinate strategy. The substance of these assumptions are critical for without them the identified instruments of national power would not be able to provide the desired effects required to secure the national and regional interests.

The Department of State's assumptions come from the strategic viewpoint of the Bureau of African Affairs (AF), which is the source of American regional influence in Africa. Also found in the AF's assumptions are the individual countries' U.S. Ambassadors and Envoys' assumptions.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) will maintain funding and continue to provide the most comprehensive efforts combating AIDS in Africa.[29] This program is not exclusive to Africa; however, 12 of the 15 focus countries are in Africa and represent the most influential American government support to combating AIDS in Africa.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) will continue to promote good trade policies for Sub-Saharan Africa.[30] Preferential trade treatment lies at the heart of the AGOA benefits for Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the United States Congress is

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[29] Ploch, *U.S. Military in Africa*, 19.

[30] 106th Congress of the United States, "Trade and Development Act of 2000," *Library of Congress.* (January 24, 2000). http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?r106:@ (accessed November 12, 2010)

considering legislation similar to AGOA for other lesser-developed nations and presents

genuine competition for American funding. In addition, "the act has undergone four

amendments since its initial passage however, of the 40 countries eligible, only 25 have

met the additional requirements to qualify for the lesser-developed status."[31] Moreover,

the current struggling global economy is responsible for the rapid decline in the value of

American imports from Sub-Saharan Africa. Decreases in American and global

consumption are likely to continue to have a negative effect on most exports from Sub-

Saharan Africa. Without the AGOA assumption above, economic relevance between the

United States and non-oil trade with Africa would be insignificant.

Sub-Saharan countries will move beyond merely holding democratic elections

and into the sphere of government accountability. Depending on the source, there are 18

to 21 democracies in Africa. Despite the number, the common obstacles to legitimacy

are government corruption, a lack of population security, and a lack of economic

prosperity. Africa must overcome these obstacles to realize the fullness of a functioning

democracy and a legitimate governing body that shares many of the core values that

promote individual freedoms and security. In addition, for the United States and Africa

to enter serious dialogue for partnership, there must be more than a common

understanding of the importance of government accountability. Without leadership

behavior that places the well-being of its constituents first, those governments may see

even American humanitarian assistance taken away.

The Obama Administration genuinely assists Africa in realizing its shared

interests with the United States. "The U.S. Government provides assistance to 47

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[31] Ploch, *U.S. Military in Africa*, 15.

countries in Africa, and USAID operates 23 bilateral missions on the continent."[32] USAID assistance to Africa works to "help African governments, institutions, and organizations incorporate good governance principles and innovative approaches to health, education, economic growth, agriculture, and the environment."[33]

The assumptions for development do not have a great impact on considerations for strategy formulation. This is due to the nature of the assistance and the conditions that lead to USAID involvement. The dire situations found in the development arena in the lesser-developed countries targeted by USAID present opportunities of improving the quality of life of most Africans. Therefore, assumptions in this area are unnecessary for it would take an egregious act by an African nation to place a strain on U.S.-African relations.

"U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) is the lead agent for the planning and use of the military instrument of national power to protect and advance national interests as they relate to Africa."[34] USAFRICOM's reason for existence is "to partner with and assist Africans in redefining their environment in a manner consistent with U.S. strategic end states."[35] The following assumptions are paramount in accomplishing the stated mission above and securing the core national interest for security.

USAFRICOM will be able to develop and improve the security capabilities of partners and African regional organizations. One can see an effective example of building partnership capacity through the African Partnership Station (APS) mission.

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[32] USAID, "Sub-Saharan Africa," http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/ (accessed on: November 13, 2010)

[33] Ibid., 1.

[34] General William E. Ward, Commander's Update #1: USAFRICOM Theater Strategy, March 3, 2008, 2.

[35] Ibid., 2.

APS is a program that thwarts maritime threats off the coast of Africa by empowering African naval forces to combat vessel-intimidation by pirates and trafficking of illicit drugs. This assumption is the key in furthering the dialogue of security for not only the United States but also its European allies.

USAFRICOM will be able to deter or defeat aggression that threatens American interests. Presently, USAFRICOM has very limited armed forces assigned to its command via the Unified Command Plan (UCP). Other than Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), there are few American forces at the ready to oppose adversaries in Africa. Despite this shortcoming, USAFRICOM is still responsible to create and employ plans that address threats identified in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) and the Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF). USAFRICOM and African nations must collaborate and pool resources to be successful against threats posed by violent extremist organizations that threaten American and African interests. This assumption gets at the heart of the discussion between the national and regional interest intensity for security.

USAFRICOM will be able to secure key lines of communications. Africa must secure key transportation routes, ports and airbases to enable regional access, and empower the growing global economy. Without this assumption, promoting economic growth and prosperity would be difficult to achieve. In addition to the APS mission mentioned earlier, other attempts to secure the global commons along the African coasts have yielded meager results as seen in the following excerpt from a British Broadcasting Corporation article:

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said 53 ships were hijacked worldwide - 49 of them off Somalia's coast - and eight sailors were killed. The IMB described as alarming the continued increase in hostage-taking incidents - the highest number since the centre began monitoring in 1991. Overall, there were 445 pirate attacks last year - a 10% rise from 2009.[36]

Assumptions for the three elements of national power set the stage for the analysis to come. Each incorporates the assumptions made at the strategic level and under pins the foundation of strategy formulation. Though not considered in this paper, these assumptions would add to the chorus of inputs for the overall risk analysis as well.

The assumptions described in this section highlight the informational gaps found in the strategic environment that one has to link to close core national and regional interests effectively. The assumptions also bring to light the critical performance limitations among the instruments of national power and their effects on strategy. In short, assumptions lay the foundation for the clear thinking of the logical discourse that dominates determining key strategic factors.

<div align="center">Regional Interests Discussion</div>

Beginning with the oil and global trade regional interest, it was clear to see from the analysis in the Determining the Intensity of Interests step that the oil influence was the main driver relating back to the core national interest for economic growth and prosperity. Therefore, one would expect to see the key factors relate more closely with the oil influence. However, there is a potential opportunity available through the regional consolidation of resources and talents to improve economic growth and prosperity in West Africa through the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS).

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[36] BBC, "Pirates Seized Record 1,181 Hostages in 2010 – Report," *BBC News*, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/world-africa-12214905 (accessed January 24, 2011).

"The Economic Community of Western African States was created in 1975 and joined 15 West African states to establish an economic and monetary union to further advance the quality of life of western Africans."[37] This union bases its existence on principles of equality, interdependence, nonaggression, stability, and security. Currently, very little formal trade agreements exist between the United States and ECOWAS but the economic intent and health and human rights focus of this body may become an example of regional partnership with the United States.

As previously stated, the United States currently imports 20% of its total oil supply from Africa. The majority of American oil imports are from North America via Canada and Mexico. In fact, the United States sits on the world's largest untapped oil reserves. Energy experts are aware of the oil fields but deem them unattainable due to current environmental concerns and inadequate extraction technology. "These untapped reserves are estimated at about 2.3 trillion barrels, nearly three times more than the reserves held by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)."[38] The motivation for the United States to exploit these domestic oil reserves do not appear to be a high priority for national leadership. In fact, the current Administration ran for election on a platform highlighting renewable energy sources. The reality of a struggling economy and high levels of unemployment provided a very appealing alternative to the American dependency on foreign oil. The intent is to move further away from a national dependence on oil but there are no signs of significant progress away from imports.

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[37] Economic Community of Western African States website, http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/index.php?id=about_b&lang=en (accessed on 3 January 2011).

[38] Jim Ostroff, "The U.S.' Untapped Oil Bounty," *The Kiplinger Letter*, June 30, 2008, http://www.kiplinger.com/businessresource/forecast/archive/The_U.S._s_Untapped_Bounty_080630.html (accessed December 17, 2010).

Moreover, if it were not for significant oil discoveries outside of Africa, the United States' demand for African oil would not change. However, other players involved may influence the U.S.-African oil import demand-signal. A recent discovery of light crude in Brazil would certainly help meet the growing global demand. This find does not bode well for Africa. It is too early to tell the effects of these oil reserves on African oil exports, but they will most likely pose a source of competition.

Another important influence to consider is China. "In 2007, Chinese companies invested a total of more than one billion U.S. dollars in Africa, most of which were put into the oil and gas industry."[39] Despite the language and cultural differences between China and Africa, China is there to stay to satisfy their insatiable appetite for natural resources and energy. China's presence in itself does not pose a threat to any of the core or regional American interests in Africa. Their presence does however present another wrinkle in the strategic environment that one must consider. The United States will find itself at an economic disadvantage due to self-imposed constraints founded in American values like human rights and environmental concerns. In other words, the United States often bases its economic partnerships on more idealistic principles at the expense of capitalistic market forces, especially when dealing with nations that have unstable governments that make them vulnerable to corruption and other negative distractors as evident in the African Growth and Opportunity Act discussed earlier. China avoids many of the moral dilemmas inescapable by the United States, thus giving China an advantage when attracting African profit seekers.

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[39] George Feng, "Cultural Challenges to Chinese Oil Companies in Africa and their Strategies," *Energy Policy* 38, no. 11 (November 2010): 1.

Another strategic influence to consider is the American public. The current and near-term political and public focus is on the economy. It is true that Afghanistan remains a focus of heavy American foreign engagement but with the recent change in the troop withdrawal timetables, Americans appear to be satisfied with the country's abating involvement in Afghanistan. However, Americans are not satisfied with the economy, and as a way to cope with the harsh fiscal realities, Americans have taken an inward focus and a more critical view of national leadership. Americans are acutely interested in their leadership's ability to reduce unemployment and taxes in an effort to relieve the pressures of a struggling economy. The United States' economic relationship with Africa falls much lower on the priority scale. Americans are focusing more on domestic issues due to economic hardships. So what does that mean for U.S.-African economic relations? The answer is very little in the next five to 10 years. Despite the economic hardships in America, Africa's demand on the American economy has minimal effect. As previously mentioned in the oil and global trade regional interest discussion, even without receiving the African oil supply, any negative effects will remain within a manageable range for Americans.

The maritime security regional interest has a peculiar focus. As part of the guidelines for the intensity level determination, regional interest can be associated only with one core national interests. Moreover, in the case of this paper, the core national interests associated with the maritime security regional interest was economic growth and prosperity. However, as one would imagine, maritime security affects much more than economic growth and prosperity, namely, security.

U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) primarily shoulders the security load. In addition, one of the most effective means to date of addressing African maritime threats has been through the African Partnership Station (APS) mission previously discussed and the Combined Maritime Forces operations. APS is the perfect example of building partnership capacity that illustrates the ability of indigenous authorities to adequately deal with domestic security challenges. Due to the proximity and influence of the illicit activities off the northern coast of Africa, Europeans have a stake in the success of the Africans in this endeavor. Whether it is drugs, pirating, or human trafficking, all of these ills deliver to the doorstep of Europe via Africa a problem demanding attention. The world is more interdependent than ever; therefore, actions in one region invariably influence other regions. Many of the United States' allies and partners are participating through organizations like the United Nations and Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) to rally to the cause of African maritime security.

Another important factor to consider for maritime security is its relevance to the American population. Outside the dramatic coverage of U.S. Special Forces killing Somali pirates on national television, the American public is immune to the first-order effects of African maritime security. African coasts are not primary vacation destinations for Americans and where Americans do frequent, extra security personnel augment local security to ensure individual safety. Nevertheless, second-order effects, like increased insurance on commercial vessels that must transit pirate-infested waters, require more consideration because the consumer absorbs those costs. However, as discussed earlier, the current amount of trade between the United States and Africa is not significant enough to stress the American consumer.

Equally valuable is the impact on the African population. Despite the grim past between the United States and Africa sourcing back to elements of slavery, Africans have welcomed the partnership of the United States and other security stakeholders to combat maritime threats. As the African maritime security capacity grows, the population benefits in many ways. One cannot ignore the immediate positive effects of safety. Security enables a community to flourish and achieve their full potential. Security also creates confidence in leadership, which has not been a common theme found in many of the struggling democracies in Africa. Also important to consider is employment. Current African maritime security personnel are well below the level required to maintain the positive trend of defeating pirates. The naval security requirement will provide young Africans a means of employment and a direct stake in their national security. Not only will they be able to display their skills in the defense of their respective countries and regions but also be relevant in global maritime security events.

Another important influence to consider is the threat. Pirating and oil bunkering is prevalent in Africa mainly due to an immature security apparatus getting stronger but is inadequate to defeat and deter the current threat. Resource constraints and the risks involved, present an enormous challenge in eliminating pirate actions against commercial vessels, which accounted for an estimated $30 million in 2008 by Somali pirates.[40] In addition, as long as a lack of constructive alternatives to piracy remains, the profits and lifestyle will continue to attract young Africans, which makes this destructive cycle more likely to continue.

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[40] Ploch et al., *Piracy off the Horn*, Summary page.

The third and fourth regional interests to consider are armed conflict and violent extremism. Three topics normally come to mind when discussing Africa: human suffering, armed conflict, and terrorism. Armed conflict has an incapacitating effect on the governments of Africa because it directly challenges the security of its people. Peace is a byproduct of a functioning government and armed conflict is a symbol of a dysfunctional government. This dysfunction has led to the bounty of ungoverned spaces throughout Africa that pose a significant terrorist threat to the United States and its allies and partners. The negative effects of terrorists' safe havens in Pakistan on the current counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan will likely repeat themselves in Africa. The world is well aware of the danger of allowing violent extremist organizations (VEO) sanctuary. However, just as with Pakistan, the United States must carefully navigate African sovereignty to avoid a point of contention that would stymie the desired effects.

Short of declaring war, the United States has limited direct-leverage in Africa when dealing with VEOs. The seven ongoing UN military operations represent complicated examples of the complex environment that is Africa and highlights a global tapestry of concern directed at terrorism. Despite their relation, armed conflict and terrorism deserve a bit of delineation.

One can closely associate armed conflict with a government's inability to resolve constituent issues of importance peacefully. The world views the atrocities resulting from armed conflict in Africa through a sympathetic lens but mainly as an African problem in which Africans must facilitate a lasting solution. Parts of the solution can come from outside support, but Africans must invite it. That is why global organizations like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN)

carefully consider where and how to employ its instruments of power concerning African armed conflict. In this way, supporting organizations minimize colonial overtones and the world becomes stakeholders along with Africans to address the issues.

For example, the civil wars in Cote d'Ivoire and the recent elections strife where the incumbent lost the Presidential election but refuses to cede power, has been denounced by both the United States and the United Nations but very little is being done to force a correction. The United States, who is supporting UN personal protection of the newly elected president, has taken a defensive role in hopes that African leadership in the region can safely resolve the issue. At the time of this paper, the election struggle has not been resolved.

Many nations, including the United States have served notice to violent extremist organizations throughout the world. The shared threats posed by VEOs have unified the world in interesting ways. The prevailing connotations of VEOs link their actions to the hijacking of the Muslim's faith of Islam. Moderate Muslims who profess a want for a peaceful existence with Christians and other world faiths have met this association with great exception. However, even the moderate argument is contradictory to popular interpretations of the Koran. It is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on this issue further but what is important to note is the terrorist organization that claimed responsibility for the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, was under the banner of radical Islam.

The success of the Al Qaeda terrorist organization has provided a popular affiliation phenomenon among smaller, less organized terrorist groups in hopes of bringing legitimacy and funding to their cause. Despite the growth in Al Qaeda affiliates,

counter-terrorist activities contribute to the defense of the United States and are responsible for foiling several attempted terrorist plots against the United States and its citizens abroad.

Moreover, Americans are much more responsive and tolerant of the inconveniences caused by bolstering homeland security to support counter-terrorist operations. Americans are more willing to give up some privacy conveniences as evidenced by the current aggressive and more intrusive security searches in airports and train stations. Other nations have stepped up security screening on modes of transportation embarking for the United States and have been very proactive and sensitive to the clear and present danger of terrorism.

The enemy gets a vote, and directly affects the discussion of armed conflict and VEOs. The direct correlation between failed governance and armed conflict calls to action a whole of government approach for the United States. It is not enough to apply military answers to this problem without sequencing and coordinating diplomatic and development remedies that address the root causes and in some cases, use less lethal and more effective measures. Recalcitrant governments will continue their selfish behavior as long as the world allows them. VEOs will continue to employ asymmetric tactics masterfully to level the playing field and enjoy advantages that have been previously the results of nation state influence. Unfortunately, the African population is sorrowfully the victim here. VEOs take advantage of and destroy families via means of armed conflict. Mix in the impoverished conditions that many live and a very depressing picture remains burned into the surface of the global lens. The U.S. State Department's Bureau of African Affairs and other instruments of national "soft" power will provide the most

lasting and sincere support to Africans. Some would argue, what good is security if one

does not have a home? What good is security if one does not have food? What does it

mean to starve and be homeless safely? The sword cannot answer these questions. These

questions require at times a more subtle and lasting answer that primarily comes from the

policy activities of diplomatic and development professionals.

The last regional interest to consider is the human suffering effects surrounding

HIV/AIDS. From Hollywood to the United Nations, Africa has been the primary

beneficiary of AIDS relief. Like natural disasters, the HIV/AIDS predicament has

galvanized global support for relief efforts. No contribution is too small. Everyone

wants in on being a part of the solution. The United States leads the way and continues

to do so with charitable contributions from private citizens and organizations, but it was

not until President George H. Bush created the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS

Relief (PEPFAR) that this disease obtained national policy attention. The Obama

Administration has decided to continue funding for PEPFAR and though this relief

package is not exclusive to Africa, the majority of the beneficiary countries are in Africa.

A fundamental human compassion exists that transcends differences between the

supporter and supported culture and beliefs.   A compassion that focuses squarely on the

suffering individual as a human being and one that has seen no limit to the fight to

conquer this mammoth disease. From the start, Americans considered AIDS a lesbian

and homosexual or promiscuous lifestyle dependent disease. The effects of AIDS

emblazed distress on the hearts and minds of Americans when it saw its heroes like Rock

Hudson and Magic Johnson fall prey to the disease. However, after the world learned of

its devastating effect on Africa, the global citizen felt compelled to act and avert as much

suffering as possible. As mentioned earlier, America suffers from the effects of

HIV/AIDS as well but not to the extent of Africa. There has not been an indication that

support to Africa has stymied HIV/AIDS progress in the United States. In fact, it is easy

to see why Americans have combined a growing HIV/AIDS support to Africa with

programs and efforts focused on improving the basic living conditions of impoverished

Africans.

The medical aspect is primary to treating HIV/AIDS but one has to improve

sanitary living conditions and even education to optimize the medical solutions. Dealing

with a disease of this magnitude requires the combined resources of the wealthiest

nations and the simple compassion of global citizens. Though American support to the

African HIV/AIDS issue is not preventing domestic progress against the disease,

successful treatment creates a negative second-order effect. The unintended consequence

of victims living longer imparts a more expensive treatment regimen over time.

Currently, HIV/AIDS is not curable, but it is treatable, and as lifespans of victims

increase due to medical progress, subsequent medical costs will also increase. Despite

the genuine call to help Africans in this respect, fiscal realities command attention.

Though too early to tell the impact, it may come a time soon where it becomes too

expensive for the United States to further HIV/AIDS support to Africa in lieu of more

pressing national priorities.

In summary, this step has walked the reader through the full range of U.S.-African

regional interests and has done so through varying perspectives and contexts. The

purpose of accessing the information is to help identify and evaluate strategic factors that

affect or potentially affect the interests in hopes of revealing strategic factors that will

lead to key strategic factors. The next step will build upon this assessment of the

information and help bring the key strategic factors to the surface.

Determine Strategic Factors and Select Key Factors

Strategic factors are defined as – "the things that can potentially contribute to or

detract causally from the realization of the interests."[41] Factors are different from

information due to their causal relationship to the interests. Therefore, "strategic factors

must be stated to show their bearing on the interests."[42]

Determining the strategic factors from the vast strategic environment would be

extremely difficult without using a tool to scope the problem better. This paper uses a

structural analysis model to assist in the identification of strategic factors. The structural

analysis model helps sort through the overwhelming volume of information by looking

through the lens of elements of national power that include, "Geography, Population,

Natural Resources, Economic, Military, Political, and Socio-Psychological."[43] For

example, the strategic factor for Oil and Global Trade interest – *A breakthrough in*

renewable energy will reduce the demand for foreign oil, came from the Natural

Resources & Economic structural analysis perspectives. Though the analysis found in

this paper did not use all of the structural model components, one can see the utility in

this structured approach in identifying strategic factors. Once one determines the

strategic factors, the following step involves selecting the key strategic factors.

Key strategic factors are defined as – "factors the strategist determines are at the

crux of interaction within the environment that can or must be used, influenced or

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[41] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 57.

[42] Ibid., 58.

[43] Ibid., 60.

countered to advance or protect the specified interests."[44] This paper uses the U.S. Army War College five strategic thinking competencies to aid in the evaluation of the strategic factors.

The five strategic thinking competencies are Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Systems Thinking, Thinking in Time, and Ethical Thinking.[45] Using the previous example for the Oil and Global Trade interest – *A breakthrough in renewable energy will reduce the demand for foreign oil*; the Systems Thinking competency reveals this strategic factor as a <u>key</u> strategic factor. On the surface, renewable energy may have a direct effect against the United States' demand for foreign oil, but the possible negative effects on domestic employment and the reduction of the relevance of African and Middle Eastern countries whose global influence is oil-based, could be globally destabilizing. Therefore, ensuing strategy formulation must be sensitive to and account for the possible multi–order effects of this factor. Similar to the structural analysis model used to identify strategic factors, one need not use all thinking competencies in the evaluation process of key strategic factors; in fact, one should only use those that lend to identifying what is important.

The use of a table is an effective format to articulate the strategic factors relationship to regional interests. In the table below, the first column contains the regional interests and the second column contains the strategic factors gleaned from the

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[44] Yarger, *National Security Professional*, 56.

[45] Dr. Yarger defines the thinking competencies in the following manner: Critical Thinking – is the ability to deliberately, consciously, and appropriately apply reflective skepticism; Creative Thinking – is the ability to develop new ideas and concepts that identify, explain, and help resolve current or potential issues and situations; Systems Thinking – allows the individual to deal with complex situations that are beyond a cause-and-effect relationship; Thinking in Time – is the quality of thought that understands the role of both continuities from the past and the processes of change in the shaping of the future; Ethical Thinking – evaluates the "rightness" of a policy or strategy.

information assessment. Following the table is an evaluation of the strategic factors that

lead to the identification of key strategic factors. In an effort not to appear mechanical,

one will find limited direct reference to either the structural analysis model components

or thinking competencies in the following strategic factors and key strategic factors

discussion.

Table 2.2 Oil and Global Trade Strategic Factors

Oil and Global Trade	The discovery of oil in other parts of the world will diminish the United States' reliance on African oil exports
	A change in American policy or technology that will allow drilling in massive un-tapped oil fields within the continental United States will reduce the demand for foreign oil
	A breakthrough in renewable energy will reduce the demand for foreign oil
	China's demand on African oil exports will limit the amount of oil the United States imports from Africa
	The price of gasoline increases to a level that significantly affects the quality of life of Americans and forces national leadership to look for enduring relief outside of OPEC
	The African Growth and Opportunity Act will continue to provide a competitive advantage for Sub-Saharan Africa
	The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) continues to promote cooperation and integration of resources and talents that increases economic growth and prosperity between the United States and West Africa

Of the seven strategic factors listed in Table 2.2, three are key factors to strategy

development. First, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is essential to

trade relations between the United States and Africa. AGOA provides the preferential

treatment needed to sustain the lesser-developed nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Just as

the United States has done with its allies and partners like Israel and Egypt, the competitive economic advantage gleaned from the special relationship is powerful.

Second is China's demand on African oil exports. From a simple economic supply and demand construct, China's massive population coupled with an explosion of an increased quality of life, places a great demand on energy resources. China sees Africa as a viable option to bridge their energy requirements. China is investing billions in the African oil industry and looks to Africa for other commodities. Therefore, as China continues to meet its growing oil demand, the United States may face a reduced oil supply in Africa.

Last, a breakthrough in renewable energy sources will be a "wildcard" that would send shockwaves throughout the energy sector. By current technology, renewable energy sources are not economically competitive to fossil fuels. Viewing it through a system of systems lens, the United States must be thoughtful of the multi-ordered effects prior to shifting away from fossil fuels. The success in renewable energy may have a net reduction in employment and consumer buying power. In addition, the United States by many accounts is the world's leading polluter of the environment. Ethically thinking, are the profits from the fossil fuels industry worth the resulting environmental damage? Renewable fuels would definitely have a positive impact on the environment but losing the economic benefits of fossil fuels will pose a significant dilemma.

Table 2.3 Maritime Security Strategic Factors

Maritime Security	The African Partnership Station (APS) will continue to grow and develop African Naval and anti-piracy capabilities
	Europe will continue to partner to combat maritime illicit activities off the northern coast of Africa
	The vast number of commercial ships transiting African waters and global commons near Africa pose a significant problem that far outweighs the capacity of the United States and African naval capabilities
	The effect of pirating has increased the cost of insurance on commercial vessels transiting African waters that has increased the cost of goods to the consumer
	The African population has energetically welcomed the increase in maritime security for both its safety and economic benefits
	Pirates understand and capitalize on the utility of their behavior and will continue to perform illicit activity until they are either deterred or destroyed

Of the six strategic factors listed in Table 2.3, five are key to strategy development. The first key strategic factor centers on the viability and effectiveness of the APS. Prior to APS' existence, maritime security for Africa consisted of an ad-hoc maritime and coastal force without unity of effort. USAFRICOM has provided the leadership and unity of effort required to manage a coherent force to diminish maritime threats and to build African maritime capacity.

Next, one has to factor in Europe's role into any maritime strategy going forward. Once again, the systems thinking competency has a role here. As maritime security off the coast of Africa becomes more effective, the adversary will explore other transportation routes that will most likely funnel illicit products through Europe as a final destination or waypoint enroute to the United States. Information sharing will be

paramount among all the security stakeholders to create a common operating picture that is accurate and exploitable.

The third key strategic factor accounts for the vast number of commercial vessels in which piracy effects. The limited maritime security assets cannot safeguard all of these ships. Creative deterrence will provide the best solution to this problem. Some entities consider these acts of piracy as legal matters, not military, thus requiring coordination of agencies that have jurisdiction to board ships and make arrests.

The fourth strategic factor examines the African population's support of the improved maritime security. A secure Africa is fundamental to a sovereign Africa. As Africans take on more maritime security responsibility, their confidence grows and their dependence on outside support diminishes. It is imperative that the United States places an African "face" on the success of maritime security as soon and as much as possible.

Using the creative thinking and thinking in time competencies, one could imagine using the maritime security staffing deficiencies to lure Africans away from a life of piracy. Maritime security and law enforcement professions could provide an alternative to piracy, and may even convert existing pirates to a life of fighting crime. This technique has been successful in other crime fighting measures to battle gang violence and drug trafficking in the United States. A big challenge associated with this solution assumes there will be either a moral awakening or fear of the pirate lifestyle that would motivate Africans to choose joining the maritime security team in the first place.

The last key factor accounts for the current pirate position of advantage. Despite maritime security successes, pirates enjoy the lifestyles guaranteed from hijacking ships and ransoming crews. Pirate activities are worth the risks as evidence from the following

excerpt from a Reuter's article: "Pirates operating off Somalia have stepped up hijack attacks on vessels in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden in recent months, making tens of millions of dollars in ransoms, despite the presence of foreign navies off the coast of Somalia."[46]

Table 2.4 Armed Conflict Strategic Factors

Armed Conflict	Struggling democracies are the major source for armed conflict in Africa
	Corrupt leadership fuels the fire of armed conflict
	Governing body inability to resolve peacefully constituent's issues of importance, facilitates an armed conflict situation
	A peaceful transfer of power through a fair and open election process will become the norm

Of the four strategic factors listed in Table 2.4, only one lends itself to being a key strategic factor. The struggling democracy is the key to focus on for addressing the armed conflict interest. The primary goal of a state's existence is to protect its population against both external and internal threats. In the 18 to 21 failing states in Africa, elected leadership are losing their ability to keep their population safe and in most instances, the ruling authority is the problem.

Democracies can be unpredictable and the United States has to prepare itself for the realities of what a democratic process may yield. It is possible that an anti-American leader comes to power via a democratic process but at least the world will hear people's voice and maybe other freedoms will flow through the same rights that gave their vote a voice.

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[46] Jack Kimball, "U.S. Navy captures pirates in clash off Seychelles," *Reuters*, April 1, 2010 http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE63023820100401 (accessed December 31, 2010).

Another point to consider is the thoughtful use of Discrete Military Operations (DMO) to create desired political effects. The Clinton Administration employed this technique often and has recently come under fire by a Fellow for Conflict Prevention, Council on Foreign Relations, who concluded that of the 36 DMOs carried out since the early 1990s; only a few obtained their desired effects.[47] Therefore, the United States must take explicit care if employing DMOs to ensure the second and third order effects are not counter-productive.

Though not specifically mentioned as a strategic factor, the situation in Sudan is an isolated case that has a policy and strategy all its own. The current North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) has yet to complete its course.[48] Though it does refer to the third strategic factor listed above, there is more to it than merely a government not being able to meet the needs of its constituents. The Darfur issue will influence any armed conflict policy and strategy that goes forward, and the strategic impact will have a unique focus that the overarching strategy formulation would address.

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[47] Micah Zenko, interview by Greg Bruno, Staff Writer CFR.org, September 1, 2010.

[48] U.S. State Department, Intensifying Diplomacy in the Lead up to the Referenda in Sudan (September 2010), by Office of the Spokesman (Washington DC, 2010)

Table 2.5 Violent Extremism Strategic Factors

Violent Extremism	Safe havens enabled by ungoverned spaces provide a breeding ground for violent extremist organizations
	The coordinated and synchronized use of American instruments of national power are effective in combating VEOs
	The case must continue to be made that terrorism is a global problem requiring a global solution and that American counter-terrorist actions are just
	VEOs export terrorism globally
	VEOs are the target of counter-terrorist operations, not Islam
	All affiliates and supporters of VEOs are subject to the same treatment applied to VEOs

Of the six strategic factors listed in Table 2.5, four are key factors to strategy formulation for combating violent extremism. As witnessed during the successful British counter-insurgent operations in Malaya, it is vitally important not to afford the adversary sanctuary. This principle is true for counter-insurgencies as well as conventional operations. To deny the adversary time to replenish his capabilities reduces his ability to threaten the United States, its citizens, and allies and partners.

One can compare VEOs to organized crime syndicates based on their use of various fronts to conceal their true intentions. Therefore, just as using police officers only to catch criminals may not be enough, only using military power is insufficient as well against VEOs. This situation requires the entire complement of national power. For example, economic capabilities can freeze assets, whereas diplomatic pressures can influence external support to accept American objectives. This systems way of thinking is paramount for strategy formulation against VEOs.

Despite the certain Islamic tie to the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, VEOs can originate from any number of sources and religion should not be the sole focus. The United States is just as motivated to defeat Islamic VEOs as non-Islamic ones. What is important is the target of the VEO. If a national interest or treasure is at stake, American leadership will take all necessary steps to eradicate the threat. However, an Islamic extremist caused the most horrific terrorist act in America. Nonetheless, actions should be taken to mobilize the majority moderate Muslims' influence on the minority Islamist extremist. To alienate the moderate Muslims would send the wrong message and discard a possible ally in the fight against terrorism.

Last, the United States must hold supporters of VEOs accountable to the same penalties afforded the terrorist. The United States acknowledges legitimate neutrality but any direct or indirect support of VEOs should be dealt with as if the supporters were themselves violent extremist. The strong message of inclusion is necessary to deter support for terrorists and communicate clearly the United States' stance on this matter. The global citizen would agree that terrorism is an unacceptable tactic to use against innocent people despite his or her motivations.

Table 2.6 HIV/AIDS Strategic Factors

HIV/AIDS	The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is an effective tool to address the epidemic in Africa
	Education, development and medical support are interdependent and provide the best solution to AIDS in Africa

Both factors listed in Table 2.6, qualify as key strategic factors that one has to account for during strategy formulation. The PEPFAR legislation represents the United States policy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, and is part of a larger Global Health Initiative

championed by the Obama Administration.[49] It is through this measure that America

coordinates and decides the level of effort to apply to this epidemic. PEPFAR is an

emergency plan that may need to take on a more sustainable effort. The second strategic

factor lays the groundwork for such an approach. Though PEPFAR is the United States'

policy for AIDS in Africa, it is not exclusive to Africa. Africa needs a focused support

mechanism tailored to its situation that will provide a comprehensive, sustainable

solution until there is a cure. One cannot assume that PEPFAR dollars will continue to

grow to cover the increasing population of AIDS survivors. Therefore, an emphasis on

education, which targets preventing HIV/AIDS and improving developmental projects

that promote better living conditions, will more accurately describe the approach needed.

   The identification of the key strategic factors is essential to effective strategy

formulation. The strategic thinking competencies and the structural analysis model of

elements of power exposed the strategist to two methodologies to help evaluate and make

sense of information from the strategic environment. As stated earlier, it is beyond the

scope of this paper to formulate fully strategy based on this analysis. However, the key

strategic factors identified could be the centerpiece of U.S-African strategy formulation

going forward.

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[49] The Global Health Initiative is President Obama's policy that takes individual health programs like PEPFAR and his Malaria Initiative and combines them with health and family planning programs in an effort to provide a more comprehensive solution to global health challenges.

CONCLUSION

Taking the guesswork out of strategy requires an extremely detailed process that if followed will surely enable successful strategy formulation at any level. Dr. Yarger's strategic appraisal delivers such a framework, which allows the strategist and national security professional alike to capture systematically the key factors essential to purposeful strategy formulation.

Using the context of U.S.-African relations served well the dual purpose of a practical illustration of the strategic appraisal process and a data point to reference current and future strategic dialogue between the United States and Africa. The appraisal process necessitates objective analysis and works for any implementer irrespective of Service or post. Given strategists have different types of appraisal processes ready for employment; this paper was not an endorsement of one process over another. The purpose centered on the utility and importance of a methodical process versus an ad-hoc approach of identifying what was indeed important for strategy formulation. Therefore, by using other appraisal processes, one may uncover other insights that may not have been apparent using the Yarger framework. In addition, the use of an actor structural approach versus the elements of power structural approach used in this paper may too have uncovered other insights. What is important to note is there are many structural approach models at one's disposal and the national security professional needs to exploit the appropriate ones to distill the key factors from the vastness of information contained in the strategic environment.

The final step in the strategic appraisal process is strategy formulation. Unfortunately, the scope of this paper does not allow the full development of this natural

progression. Once again, utilizing multiple implementers vice an individual to formulate

strategy is ideal. However, the following recommendations will provide a general

overview of an ends, ways, means, and risk description of strategy derived from the key

strategic factors identified in the strategic appraisal process. These recommendations will

add to the body of work required to yield successful policy and strategy for U.S.-African

relations.

Table 3.1 Oil and Global Trade Recommendation

Ends	Mutual prosperity that is a result of a strong domestic and international economy
Ways	Maintain the African Growth and Opportunity Act as a life-line to the severely under-developed countries in Sub-Saharan Africa Develop "climate friendly" methods of bringing goods and services to market Develop safer and more efficient oil and gas discovery and recovery methods Continued partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to promote cooperation and integration of resources and talents that increases economic growth and prosperity between the U.S. and West Africa
Means	U.S. Department of State and Treasury Global economic entities like the European Union (EU), International Monetary Fund, and the African Union Economic resources of stakeholders that depend on the global commons that represent maritime trade routes
Risks	The influence of China disrupting U.S.-African economic relations is probable China's economic partnerships are unrestrained while the United States places constraints on economic partnerships giving value to human rights and legitimate governance The fallout created by the eventual discovery of economical ways of harnessing renewable energy that will replace the world's dependence on fossil fuels The discovery of oil in other parts of the world will diminish American reliance on African oil imports The price of gasoline increases to a level that significantly affects American quality of life and forces leadership to look for enduring relief outside of OPEC

Table 3.2 Maritime Security Recommendation

Ends	A safe and prosperous maritime environment that meets not only the domestic needs of Africans but also the global demands of safely linking Southwest Asia to the Americas
Ways	Target source of piracy that is ground-based and centered on criminal activities along the coastal cities bordering the Gulf of Aden and Guinea Eradicating piracy and other maritime threats via the African Partnership Station and Combined Maritime Forces Building African naval capacities to defend commercial shipping vessels and protect African interests through effective coastal defense
Means	U.S. Africa Command emphasizing the influence of its Naval forces U.S. Coast Guard and Federal Bureau of Investigation operations against illicit activities that are often associated with piracy Economic resources of stakeholders who depend on the global commons that represent maritime trade routes
Risks	Piracy increases the cost of products transiting the Gulfs of Aden and Guinea Africans develop a dependency on outside sources that prevents the creation and appreciation of what it takes to build enduring organic naval security capabilities

Table 3.3 Armed Conflict Recommendation

Ends	Governing entities in Africa can peacefully meet the needs of their constituents and effectively secure their national interests
Ways	Continue partnerships with nations dedicated to governing democratically Insist at every opportunity to place an African "face" on successful security ops A clear message of United States policy of non-tolerance of governments who terrorize their constituents and mismanage American provided resources
Means	NATO peace-keeping forces, U.S. Department of State and U.S. AFRICOM
Risks	Opposition's strategic communication will distort the true intent of the United States against supporters of armed conflict States receiving assistance may through democratic processes elect a government that is anti-American American allegiance may predispose a supported country to unwarranted opposition merely based on the association with a Western country Struggling democracies fall victim to corruption and subsequent negative characteristics of such power

Table 3.4 Violent Extremism Recommendation

Ends	A sovereign African continent inhospitable to violent extremist organizations (VEO)
Ways	Good governing support to established and struggling democracies Improved education and development programs that address basic human needs currently going unfilled and accounted for by VEOs Building African capacity in military and law enforcement Motivate emerging economic countries like China and India to take on more of the security responsibility to protect their interests in Africa Severe, swift and consistent punishment when dealing justice to VEOs and those who support and sponsor them
Means	Comprehensive U.S. Instruments of national power: Diplomacy, Development, Defense, Education, and Economic International stakeholders' resources from entities like the EU and NATO
Risks	VEOs find sanctuary in ungoverned spaces thus are given the time to obtain/secure and target the United States, its citizens, or allies with WMD A lack of competent authority leads to ungoverned spaces that provide sanctuary to VEOs Limited resources to cover the demand of vulnerable ungoverned spaces

Table 3.5 HIV/AIDS Recommendation

Ends	An increasingly healthy African continent that has arrested the controllable rise in HIV/AIDS cases
Ways	Continue the PEPFAR program Maintain the focus of President Obama's Global Health Initiative, which includes education as a cornerstone to success A re-invigorated strategic communications message that stresses the global significance of addressing this disease
Means	U.S. State Department and USAID International health organizations
Risks	Advancements in HIV/AIDS care are prolonging the life expectancy of those infected, which leads to increased medical care costs Living conditions in Africa may not be at a level that capitalizes on the educational messaging and medicines required to treat the disease

Taking the guesswork out of strategy is a very difficult undertaking, but it is not impossible. An appraisal process provides the tools that will lead a national security professional through a complex strategic environment successfully. The Theory of Strategy principles such as strategy is contextual and subordinate to the nature of the environment, and strategy is founded in what needs to be accomplished and why it is to be accomplished, typify the essence of the Strategic Appraisal Process. In addition, incorporating the wisdom from the Structural Analysis model and Thinking Competencies provides a powerful framework from which to formulate effective policy and strategy.

The importance of formulating sound strategy cannot be overstated. Though the world is becoming more complex due to perplexing trends in demographics, economics, and technology, the governed expect their leaders to deliver more than promised. Faulty strategies waste valuable resources and may even threaten the safety of a nation. Even if conditions allowed an unconstrained resource environment, one should make every effort to shorten and make certain the route to success. Policy and strategy formulation is a human venture with all the trappings of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Nonetheless, national security professionals must create sure-paths to achieve their intended goals and trustingly this paper provided vital insights that will assist him or her in that endeavor.

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